



Media Release

California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Central Valley Region
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Blue-green algae bloom in Lake Britton; Caution Urged in Water Contact

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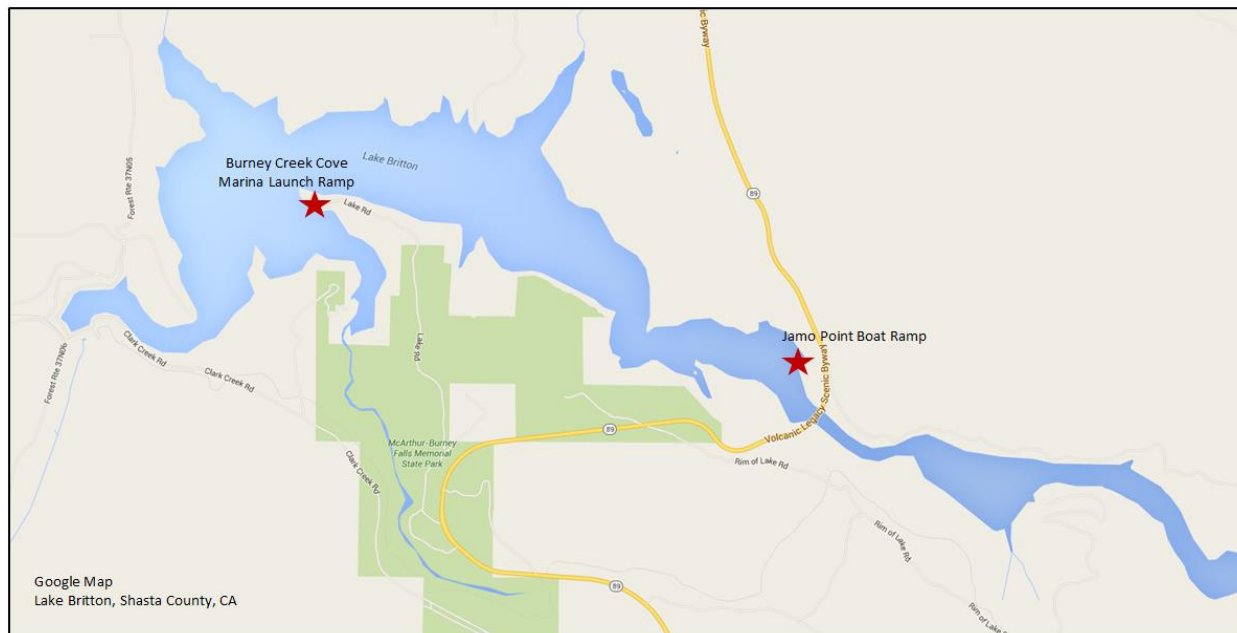
SACRAMENTO – Due to its potential health risks, federal, state and county agencies are urging swimmers, boaters and recreational users to avoid direct contact with or use of waters containing blue-green algae (cyanobacteria), which is now beginning to bloom in Lake Britton. Lake Britton is located in northern California in Shasta County.

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board staff made visual observations of the beginning of a cyanobacteria bloom at both the Burney Creek Cove Marina Launch Ramp and the Jamo Point Boat Ramp. A water sample collected at the Burney Creek Cove Marina Launch Ramp in Lake Britton has confirmed the presence of at least three different types of cyanobacteria.

At this point in time, the blooms are located near the boat launch ramps but wind and currents may move the bloom throughout the lake. The presence of toxins has not been confirmed as toxin testing is currently underway. Until toxin testing results are completed, residents and recreational water users of Lake Britton are urged to use caution and avoid getting in the water or letting dogs swim in or near these bloom areas.

Blue-green algae can pose health risks, particularly to children and pets. We urge people to choose safe activities when visiting Lake Britton and recommend that people and their pets avoid contact with water in locations with blooms, and avoid swallowing or inhaling water spray in an algae bloom area.





The google map shown above indicates the two locations in Lake Britton where a cyanobacteria bloom was visually confirmed (Burney Creek Cove Marina Launch Ramp and Jamo Point Boat Ramp). An evaluation of a water sample taken from the Burney Creek Cove Marina Launch Ramp has confirmed the presence of at least three different genera of cyanobacteria – *Dolichospermum sp. (Anabaena)*, *Gloeoetrichia sp.*, and *Aphanizomenon sp.*.

The algae bloom can appear as blue-green, white or brown foam, scum or mats that can float on the water's surface and accumulate along the shoreline and boat ramp areas.

Recreational exposure to toxic blue-green algae can cause eye irritation, allergic skin rash, mouth ulcers, vomiting, diarrhea, and cold and flu-like symptoms. Liver failure, nerve damage and death have occurred in rare situations where large amounts of contaminated water were directly ingested. Pets can be especially susceptible since they tend to drink the water and lick their fur after going in the water.

The [Statewide Guidance on Cyanobacteria and Harmful Algal Blooms](#) recommends the following for blue-green algae impacted waters:

- Take care that pets and livestock do not drink the water, swim through algae, scums or mats, or lick their fur after going in the water. Rinse pets in clean water to remove algae from fur.
- Avoid wading, swimming, or jet or water skiing in water containing algae blooms or scums or mats.
- Do not drink, cook or wash dishes with untreated surface water from these areas under any circumstances; common water purification techniques (e.g., camping filters, tablets and boiling) do not remove toxins.
- People should not eat mussels or other bivalves collected from these areas. Limit or avoid eating fish from these areas; if fish are consumed, remove guts and liver, and rinse filets in clean drinking water.

- Get medical treatment immediately if you think that you, your pet, or livestock might have been poisoned by blue-green algae toxins. Be sure to alert the medical professional to the possible contact with blue-green algae.

For more information, please visit:

California Department of Public Health:

<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/healthinfo/environhealth/water/Pages/Bluegreenalgae.aspx>

State Water Resources Control Board - California CyanoHAB Network:

http://www.mywaterquality.ca.gov/monitoring_council/cyanohab_network/index.html

CA Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment: Information on Microcystin

<http://oehha.ca.gov/ecotoxicology/general-info/information-microcystins>

US Environmental Protection Agency: CyanoHAB website

https://www.epa.gov/nutrient-policy-data/cyano_habs

US Environmental Protection Agency: Anatoxin-a report

<https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-06/documents/anatoxin-a-report-2015.pdf>

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